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ABSTRACT

These guidelines on Maryland school nursing are based on recommendations of a Maryland committee composed of representatives from state and local health and education agencies, schools of nursing, the Board of Nursing, Maryland State School Health Council, directors of nursing, and a physician. The standards established by the American Nurses Association and the National Association of School Nurses were also used as a basis for this document. The document delineates the role of the school nurse in these areas: theory and knowledge; program management; nursing process (including assessment, nursing diagnosis, planning, implementation, and evaluation); interdisciplinary collaboration; health education; professional development and conduct; community health systems; and research. A glossary of 17 related terms is provided. Recommendations of the committee include: (1) reactivate the committee and review impact of the document at the end of the 1992 school year; (2) use the document as a basis for practice and the development of job descriptions; and (3) encourage schools of nursing to develop and provide credit courses related to school nursing. (DB)

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ROLE OF THE SCHOOL NURSE

April 12, 1991

Department of Health and Mental Hygiene
Maryland State Department of Education

EC 301297

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Role of the School Nurse

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4/91

INTRODUCTION

The School Health Task Force, as one of its recommendations, charged the Department of Health and Mental Hygiene and the Department of Education to appoint a committee to delineate the roles and responsibilities of the school nurse. The committee was composed of representatives from state and local health and education agencies, schools of nursing, the Board of Nursing, Maryland State School Health Council, directors of nursing, and a physician. The resulting guidelines for the role of the school nurse series as a basis for local guidelines in a school health services program.

This document, Roles and Responsibilities of the School Nurse, delineates the role of the school nurse in these areas:

- Theory and Knowledge;
- Program Management;
- Nursing Process;
- Interdisciplinary Collaboration;
- Health Education;
- Professional Development and Conduct;
- Community Health Systems; and,
- Research.

The standards established by the American Nurses Association and the National Association of School Nurses were used as a basis for this document. COMAR 13A.05.05.05...15, School Health Services Standards, were also used to develop the role and responsibilities for the school nurse. The Role and Responsibilities of the School Nurse should not be used in isolation, but should be used as an adjunct to the previously mentioned resources.

The role of the school nurse has many facets. To ensure a successful school health program, it is necessary for the school nurse to be educationally prepared to implement the assigned responsibilities. Only with a designated school health professional, as defined in COMAR 13A.05.05.05...15, can the school nurse assist students to become successful in their educational program.

ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

I. THEORY/KNOWLEDGE

A. School nursing applies appropriate theory as a basis for decision making in nursing practice. (ANA Standard I).

B. In accordance with Health Occupations Article Title 8 Maryland Annotated Code (Nurse Practice Act) the school nurse will perform acts "requiring substantial specialized knowledge, judgement and skill" based on but not limited to the following theories which have widespread application to school nursing.

Systems theory
Change theory
Stress and coping theory
Developmental theory
Family theory
Adaptation theory
Role theory
Transcultural theory
Social support theory
Wellness-illness theory
Crisis theory
Learning theory
Management theory
Interpersonal communication theory
Hierarchy of needs theory
Group theory

C. In accordance with the NASN document, Guidelines for A Model School Nursing Services Program, the school nurse will have contemporary knowledge of the following:

1. physical and psychosocial development of infants, toddlers, preschoolers, school-age children, and adolescents;

2. pathophysiology, signs, symptoms, treatment and nursing management in the school setting of common acute and chronic physical conditions, injuries and infections/communicable diseases of childhood and adolescence;

3. nursing management of injuries, both major and minor, the epidemiology, treatment, and nursing management of infectious/communicable diseases of childhood and adolescence. This shall include human immunodeficiency virus and Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome.

4. technique of physical assessment discerning deviations from normal, with particular emphasis on the appraisal of vision and hearing, the detection of musculoskeletal conditions, including scoliosis, dental, cardiovascular and growth and developmental irregularities;

5. pharmacology of common pediatric medications;

6. normal pediatric nutritional standards, and the signs and symptoms of nutritional deficiency;

7. emotional and behavioral disorders of childhood and adolescence, including depression and suicide;

8. etiology, psychopathology, and local school policies and procedures for child abuse and neglect;

9. etiology and psychopathology of the chronically dysfunctional family and the available school and community resources for referral;

10. adolescent pregnancy, childbearing, parenting, and pregnancy-prevention strategies;

11. childhood and adolescent substance use and abuse;

12. poverty and racism and their effects on child development and child health;

13. effects of domestic and societal violence on child health development;

14. unique health problems and practices of varying racial and cultural groups;

15. cultural norms, beliefs, attitudes and values with particular regard to child-rearing, health care, and sex roles.

II. PROGRAM MANAGEMENT IN INDIVIDUAL SETTING

A. The school nurse contributes to the establishment and maintenance of a comprehensive school health program and contributes to the formulation of school health policy. (Adapted from ANA Standard II).

B. In accordance with Education Article, Annotated Code of Maryland Section 7-401; COMAR 13A.05.05.05....15; School Health Program; and local policies the school nurse integrates and implements a comprehensive school

health services program including but not limited to the following components

1. School Health Services for <u>All</u> Students

   (a) Physical Examination
   (b) Review of Records
   (c) Health Appraisal
   (d) Screening Programs
   (e) Health Counseling
   (f) Communicable Disease Control
   (g) Physical Education Program

2. School Health Services for Students with Special Health Needs

3. Emergency Services

4. Health Facilities

5. Staff Development

6. Other Programmatic Areas including but not limited to:

   (a) Health Education
   (b) Safe and Healthy School Environment
   (c) Wellness Programs

C. In other areas of program management the school nurse shall:

1. conduct inservice programs for school personnel, family and community on health related issues;

2. establish and implement goals, objectives, strategies, and measure outcomes of the school health services programs;

3. develop, evaluate, and revise reporting and recording systems to provide continuity and accountability of the program;

4. collaborate with interdisciplinary team members on strategies to enhance student achievements;

5. promote an awareness of the influence of current events and social issues on the health and well-being of students and staff;

6. orient, train and supervise paraprofessionals providing school health care;

7. plan activities of case management needed to support parents/students in developing appropriate health care management skills; and

8. evaluate the comprehensive school health program within the parameters of local, state and federal regulations and communicate the findings to administrators.

III. NURSING PROCESS - Nursing process is the systematic application of knowledge and skills used in assessing situations, deciding the course of action, implementing the action, and evaluating the outcomes.

A. ASSESSMENT

The school nurse:

(1) collects comprehensive, accurate and systematic health data on a continuous basis from student, family, significant others, school personnel, other health care professionals and records;

(2) systematically records data on the appropriate records; and

(3) compares individual student and staff health data to norms and standards to identify actual or potential health problems.

B. NURSING DIAGNOSIS

The school nurse:

(1) analyzes the assessment data to formulate a nursing diagnosis.

(2) communicates nursing diagnosis to other members of the school health team, parents and medical providers to contribute to the academic success of each student.

C. PLANNING

The school nurse:

(1) develops a plan of nursing care (PNC) for students with identified health problems based on pertinent data collection and input from the student, family, other health providers, school staff and significant people;

(2) includes in a plan of nursing care the identified priorities of care and the nursing skills and activities necessary to safely maintain that student in the school setting;

(3) reviews, revises and updates as necessary the plan of nursing care based on student responses to the nursing interventions; and

(4) develops the plan of nursing care in collaboration with other providers and school personnel.

D. IMPLEMENTATION

The school nurse:

1. carries out nursing actions to facilitate the student's educational program and to assist the student in developing healthy behaviors;

2. provides care to ill and/or injured students;

3. identifies and remediates health barriers to educational success for all students;

4. assists the student in attaining developmentally appropriate independence in self care and utilization of health care resources;

5. makes school personnel who have an educational interest in the student aware of any special health needs; and

6. serves as case manager.

E. EVALUATION

The school nurse will:

1. determine if an outcome has occurred based on the implementation of the plan of nursing care;

2. consult with student, parent/guardian and members of the school team in evaluating the outcome of the plan of nursing care;

3. analyze the student's response to nursing intervention based on the plan of nursing care;

4. document results of evaluation; and

5. maintain or revise the plan of nursing care based on health and/or behavioral changes in the student.

IV. INTERDISCIPLINARY COLLABORATION

A. The school nurse collaborates with other professionals in assessing, planning, implementing and evaluating programs and other school health activities (ANA Standard IV).

B. To incorporate interdisciplinary collaboration into the school health program, the school nurse shall:

1. apply knowledge of the philosophy and/or mission of the school, local school systems policies and procedures, curricular and extracurricular activities, programs, and special services.

2. delineate roles and responsibilities of school personnel in relation to the school health services program;

3. orient, supervise, and evaluate personnel who provide health care in the school setting;

4. use the expertise of other school personnel to meet student health, developmental, and educational needs;

5. act as an advocate for student and family in interdisciplinary collaboration;

6. collaborate with the Administration and Pupil Services Team to implement interdisciplinary plans;

7. use parent-teacher groups to enhance the school health program; and

8. include the student in the interdisciplinary collaboration whenever possible and appropriate.

C. The school nurse is recognized as an integral member of the interdisciplinary team and should participate as a member of a variety of teams and/or conferences whenever necessary e.g., Admission, Review & Dismissal, Pupil Services Team.

V. HEALTH EDUCATION -

A. The school nurse assists students, families and the school community to achieve optimal levels of wellness through developmently appropriate health education (Adapted from NASN).

B. The school nurse shall:

1. identify students' needs for health education;

2. employ learning principles and appropriate teaching methods;

3. teach basic health and safety principles to individuals and groups;

4. teach decision-making skills in self-care practices;

5. provide individual and group health education based on identified student need;

6. serve as a member of the health education curriculum committee;

7. serve as a professional resource to staff implementing health education curriculum;

8. educate staff regarding student health concerns;

9. educate staff regarding their own health;

10. promote student and staff wellness; and

11. ensure first aid and emergency care readiness.

VI. PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

A. The school nurse participates in peer review and other means of evaluation to assure quality nursing care provided for students. The school nurse assumes responsibility for continuing education and professional development and contributes to the professional growth of others (Adapted from NASN).

B. The school nurse shall:

1. initiate and participate in the peer review process;

2. consider recommendations for change resulting from evaluation and review;

3. participate in continuing education programs. This includes workshops, seminars, conferences, classes or courses, and certification or degree programs; and

4. participates in appropriate professional organizations.

VII. PROFESSIONAL CONDUCT

A. The school nurse identifies, delineates and clarifies the nursing role and demonstrates appropriate professional conduct (Adapted from NASN).

B. The school nurse shall:

1. have knowledge of the legal aspects of school nursing practice;

2. practice ethics of school nursing; and

3. be responsible and accountable for professional nursing practice in the school setting.

VIII. COMMUNITY HEALTH SYSTEMS

A. The school nurse participates and collaborates with other members of the community in the delivery of health care to students and families, and utilizes knowledge of community health systems and resources to function as a school/community liaison (Adapt NASN).

B. The school nurse shall:

1. integrate the school nursing role and the school as part of the community health system;

2. be aware of and respond to the unique health, environmental concerns, and needs of the school's community;

3. conduct an assessment of community health care resources;

4. identify and document inadequacies in school health services and explore the community health systems for resources to augment school health services;

5. identify and document absent community resources and move to establish community services or programs to fill the gaps through joint professional or political action;

6. collaborate with community health professionals regarding student and family interventions, new community development, current social issues and on-going school community agency cooperation;

7. become a recognized member of the community health systems professional network;

8. make home visits when appropriate or refer for home visits;

9. participate in community health activities as an individual or as a representative of the school; and

10. educate school personnel and community to the role of the school nurse in the community.

IX. RESEARCH

A. The school nurse contributes to nursing and school health through innovations in theory and practice and participation in research or research-related activities (Adopted NASN and ANA).

B. The school nurse shall:

1. apply the results of research activities to the school health program;

2. identify issues of concern, patterns of health/illness, function/disability, recurring signs and symptoms, or other phenomena as potential research questions;

3. collect data in the school setting and relate the data to student health problems;

4. compile and share results of needs assessments, surveys, pre-and post-tests, and program evaluations and share results with other school nurses and school staff;

5. ensure adherance to a mechanism for the protection of human subjects;

6. adhere to local, state, and federal regulations regarding student record confidentiality and students rights and responsibilities;

7. obtain expert consultations, supervision, and peer review as needed; and

8. participate in developing, conducting, and publishing research endeavors.

assessment - the act of gathering and identifying data about that client that assists the nurses, the client, and the client's family to identify the client's problems and needs. (Nurse Practice Act, Annotated Code of Maryland, Health Occupations Article, Title 7).

case management - activities designed to assist and enable an eligible child and the child's family to receive the rights, safeguards and services to which he/she is entitled (Early Intervention Program for Infants and Toddlers With Handicaps, Federal Register 1 Vol 54, #119, Department of Education.

community health systems - refers to the role of the school nurse as a community health professional, to the identification and utilization of community resources, and to the interagency networking and collaboration that results from ongoing school community cooperation. (Guidelines for Model School Nursing Services Program, NASN 1990, p. 18).

designated school health services professional - a physician, certified nurse practitioner or registered nurse, or all of these, with experience or special training, or both, in working with children and families in community or school health programs.

evaluation - a continuous, systematic and complete review of the assessment, nursing diagnosis, plan of nursing care and its implementation (Maryland Nurse Practice Act, Annotated Code of Maryland, Health Occupations Article, Title 7)

health education - (ANA) the planning, promoting, and implementing of health instruction and the provision of consultation services in health related matters.

license - a license issued by the Board of Nursing to practice:
1) registered nursing, or
2) licensed practical nursing (Nurse Practice Act, Annotated Code of Maryland, Health Occupations Article, Title 7).

nurse practice act - a statute enacted by the legislature of any state or by the appropriate officers of the district. The act delineates the legal scope of the practice of nursing within the geographical boundaries of the jurisdiction.

nursing diagnosis - a description of the actual, potential, overt or covert health problems which registered nurses are licensed to treat (Nurse Practice Act, Annotated Code of Maryland, Health Occupations Article, Title 7)

para professional - school health services aide, an unlicensed person who functions under the supervision of a designated school health services professional. The designated school health services professional shall determine the required degree of supervision on an individual basis. A school health services aide, at minimum, must be certified in cardio-pulmonary resuscitation annually and a basic first aid course every three years.

plan of nursing care - the setting of goals, judging of priorities, and designing of methods to solve identified client problems (Nurse Practice Act, Annotated Code of Maryland, Health Occupations Article, Title 7)

planning, implementation, evaluation - carrying out of the nursing plan of care (Nurse Practice Act, Annotated Code of Maryland, Health Occupations Article, Title 7)

program management - a range of activities which includes development and implementation of policy and procedure concerned with student health, the acquisition and management of funds necessary to implement student health activities and programs; and the development, coordination, and evaluation of activities and programs concerned with student health. (Guidelines for Model School Nursing Services Program, NASN 1990, p. 13)

professional development - the maintenance of continual competence in a particular area of practice by obtaining further education or supervision as required.

special health care needs - the medically related services necessary during the school day and prescribed by the student's licensed physician, which enable the student to attend school. These services require training in order for them to be provided.

standard of practice - the minimum criteria to which the registered nurse shall adhere in the practice of registered nursing. (Nurse Practice Act, Annotated Code of Maryland, Health Occupations Article, Title 7)

theory - the coherent set of principles forming the general frame of reference for a field of inquiry.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The committee proposes the following recommendations

1) Reactivate the committee to review the impact of the document and related issues at the end of school year 1992.

2) Use the Role of the School Nurse document as a bases for practice and to develop job descriptions.

3) Encourage schools of nursing to develop and provide credit courses related to school nursing.

4) Develop a permanent letter of support for the continuation of SNIP signed by the three agencies; MSDE, DHMH and University of Maryland School of Nursing.